

Airplay

She groaned as she burst through the front door to her flat, dumping her coat and bag on the floor before slamming the door shut behind her. The day had been, predictably, terrible.

From oversleeping in the morning to the new assignments now filling her bag, university had been as stressful as ever for Katie—she hadn't even had time to pause for lunch, and it was already getting dark outside. She could only think about how it was all a bit too much as she dragged herself to bed and face-planted into the duvet.

She jolted slightly as something fell onto her shoulder, rolling over to find herself face to face with her dragon. Essentially a large inflatable toy intended for kids; it was relatively plain and cartoony, but it was heavily discounted when she'd picked it up off Amazon a week or so ago and it had lived on her bed ever since.

Sighing softly she took it in her arms and squeezed it close. The inflatable creaked and whined loudly, its body bending as she cuddled it tightly. The sensation was surprisingly pleasant. The toy was larger than a pillow and easier to snuggle up to, and was surprisingly firm for a hollow piece of plastic. She wrapped a leg

around it too, giggling gently as she beeped her nose against the dragon's fat, round muzzle.

Err... her nose was stuck.

The latex of the balloon was stuck to her nose. She tried to tug herself away, but the toy moved with her, matching her movements. She squeezed it tighter, trying to force it from her body but it didn't budge. She tried to push...

Her hands were stuck too. And her leg. The latex just stretched whenever she tried to push away, elastically pulling her back into position. She managed to scream for all of half a second before the inflatable plugged her mouth.

She looked on in horror as the inflatable deformed. The latex being seemed to melt away before her eyes as though made of ice, but she still couldn't move. Then her nose tingled. She cursed her inability to scratch it as the sensation spread rapidly, yelping as a thick round muzzle knocked her glasses off whilst springing into existence.

Across her body the liquified latex was at work. Flesh replaced with rubber, muscles replaced with air and organs dissolving into nothingness. Her denim jeans tore open as a thick tail forced through the fabric; her shirt riding up to her breasts as a round, puffy tummy

stretched outwards below it and thick, cartoony wings folded out from her back.

The tingling subsided after ten minutes or so, ending at her toes. Able to move again, she sat up and grasped for her glasses, precariously balancing them upon her nose.

Staring back at her from the mirror across the room was the dragon. Well, not precisely. Her dyed red and black hair was there too, converted into an anime-esque mess of triangular spikes that stuck off at odd angles; the muzzle—while still round—was less cartoony than before; and somewhat inexplicably she had turned blue. Annoyingly her eyesight was still terrible too.

She looked around. No human body to speak off, no sign of the dragon toy either. Just herself—whatever she was.

She pressed and squeezed into her body. She was *definitely* an inflatable. Everything was sheets of latex, stitched together and blown up until it was plush and rounded. Even her (assumed) claws were just thick stumps, the only sharp corners she could find was the valve that sat at her navel, which stuck out like a big, white thumb.

Katie found herself stumbling closer to the mirror, squeaking loudly as she pulled off the torn jeans. Her body glowed in the room's artificial light. She pushed and pulled, managing to invert her muzzle

entirely into her head before the air pressure made it spring back outwards.

She laughed. Such an inexplicable turn of events wrought true. She was a balloon! A living, dragonny balloon! She smiled properly for the first time that day, half delirious with confusion and joy, her tail wagging softly from side to side.

She made her way back to the living room and one of the adjacent cupboards, quickly digging out the foot pump for the visitor's airbed. Solid matter, she reasoned, is food for humans, and eating too much makes you full—so wouldn't air then be food for inflatables? And, well... she did miss lunch today...

After a moment of hesitation she opened up the valve on her tummy, plugging the squeal of escaping air with the end of the pump's hose. Softly she pressed her foot down on the pump.

A gentle hiss made its way into her. The sensation was mildly energising, like a shot of weak coffee but more instantaneous in effect. She raised her foot and pushed it down again, letting another rush of air blow into her body. She followed it by a third and a fourth. The air filled her with vitality. Firming up her somewhat limp wings and tail, a little less give available when she pressed a hand into her round tum.

She happily kept pumping, making a little rhythm of it as she inhaled more of the air through her valve. Her shirt rode further upwards as her tummy was pushed outwards, fatter and rounder. Her foot sped up, creaking louder as her latex body grew tighter and tighter. She squeaked gleefully, pumping until she felt fit to burst.

She dropped herself onto the couch, looking down at her puffy dragon self, the working result of some impossible assortment of events. Happily she cuddled up to her round tum, squeaking away as she snuggled her brand new dragon toy.

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